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NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

8 August 1958

PROJECT CORONA

1. Under date of 15 April 1958 an outline (document number COR-0013) of the above Project, including an estimate of its cost, was submitted for the approval of higher authority after discussion with the senior officers of the organizations concerned. The desired approval was granted and was accompanied with the specific instruction that all funding for development and procurement of hardware for CORONA must come from (a) the Central Intelligence Agency, and (b) the Advanced Research Project Agency. Partly as a result of this instruction and partly because the assumptions underlying the final estimates in the Project outline were incorrect, stated, it appears desirable to present a revised estimate at this time.

2. The Project outline contained the following estimates and statements with respect to financing:

a. That covert procurement of the payloads for twelve CORONA vehicles would require [redacted] which would be provided by the CIA.

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b. That twelve Thor (first stage) boosters and Lockheed second stage vehicles would cost [redacted] on the basis of a rather arbitrary allowance of [redacted] per completed vehicle.

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25X1

c. That this procurement of vehicles would be financed for the most part by AERP through the Air Force but that there was some question concerning the allocation of the cost of the Thor boosters.

d. That in any case the whole cost of the basic vehicles (but not of the payloads) would be funded within then approved programs.

3. The following are the specific circumstances that now require revision of the foregoing statements:

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a. The allowance quoted in paragraph 2. b. above of [] per unit for the cost of the vehicles was incorrect. This figure was furnished for inclusion in the Project outline on the assumption that the Air Force would absorb the cost of Thor boosters. [] is the unit cost of the Lockheed second stage vehicle only. That of the Thor is []. Accordingly, the true cost of each completed vehicle, including first and second stages (but excluding payload) amounts to [].

b. The instruction referred to in paragraph 1. above ruled out the absorption of any part of these costs by the Air Force. Accordingly, the cost to ARPA of 12 completed vehicles will be [] instead of [] as stated in the Project outline.

c. In addition to the 12 Thor/117L vehicles which will be equipped with CORONA recoverable reconnaissance payloads, some 7 additional launchings of the same basic vehicle are programmed. Two of these will be instrumented vehicles for second stage propulsion and guidance tests; two will have as their primary purpose the testing of the recoverable capsule []

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